

LISTING OF THE CLAIMS

The following listing of claims replaces all prior versions:

1. (Currently Amended) A tampon comprising an absorbent material and a composition disposed in said absorbent material, the composition ~~having~~ comprising:

at least one antibacterial agent in an amount of about 0.10 wt% to about 2.5wt% of the total weight of the tampon, wherein said antibacterial agent is a mixture of alkyl dimethyl benzylammonium chloride and alkyl dimethyl ethylbenzylammonium chloride; and

at least one finishing agent in an amount of about 2.5 wt% of the total weight of the tampon, wherein said at least one finishing agent is one or more polyoxyethylene fatty acid esters,

wherein the composition has synergistic antibacterial properties effective to neutralize the production of TSST-1 toxin and reduce Staphylococcus aureus bacteria growth.

2 - 6. (Cancelled)

7. (Previously Presented) The tampon of claim 1, wherein said at least one antibacterial agent is present in an amount of about 1.0 wt.% based on the total weight of the tampon.

8 - 18. (Canceled)

19. (Previously Presented) The tampon of claim 1, wherein said composition further comprises one or more additional components selected from the group consisting of: preservative, deodorant, fragrance, malodor counteractant material,

humectant, and any combinations thereof.

20. (Previously Presented) A method of inhibiting the production of TSST-1 toxin by exposing TSST-1 toxin-producing *Staphylococcus aureus* bacteria to a tampon, the tampon having an absorbent material and a composition, the composition comprising:

at least one antibacterial agent in an amount of about 0.10 wt% to about 2.5 wt% of the total weight of the tampon, wherein said antibacterial agent is a mixture of alkyl dimethyl benzylammonium chloride and alkyl dimethyl ethylbenzylammonium chloride; and

at least one finishing agent in an amount of about 2.5 wt% of the total weight of the tampon, wherein said at least one finishing agent is one or more polyoxyethylene fatty acid esters;

wherein the composition has synergistic antibacterial properties effective to neutralize the production of TSST-1 toxin and reduce *Staphylococcus aureus* bacteria growth.

21 - 26. (Cancelled)

27. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 20, wherein said at least one antibacterial agent is present in an amount about 1.0 wt.% based on the total weight of the tampon.

28 - 37. (Canceled)

38. (Original) The method of claim 20, wherein said composition further comprises one or more additional components selected from the group consisting of: preservative, deodorant, fragrance, malodor counteractant material, humectant and any combinations thereof.

39. (New) The tampon of claim 1, wherein said composition consists essentially of:

about 0.10 wt% to about 2.5 wt%, based on the total weight of the tampon, of a mixture of alkyl dimethyl benzylammonium chloride and alkyl dimethyl ethylbenzylammonium chloride; and

about 2.5 wt%, based on the total weight of the tampon, of one or more polyoxyethylene fatty acid esters.

40. (New) The method of claim 20, wherein said composition consists essentially of:

about 0.10 wt% to about 2.5 wt%, based on the total weight of the tampon, of a mixture of alkyl dimethyl benzylammonium chloride and alkyl dimethyl ethylbenzylammonium chloride; and

about 2.5 wt%, based on the total weight of the tampon, of one or more polyoxyethylene fatty acid esters.